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CONFERENCE OF PCA LEADERS; PROCLAMATION TO ALGERIANS

Comment: The Central Committee of the PCA (Parti Communiste Algerien, Algerian Communist Party) held a special 2-day conference 17 and 18 January 1953. The account of the conference was carried in two issues of Liberte, the PCA weekly newspaper, which also published a full-page proclamation.

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Central Committee of PCA Holds Important Two-Day Conference

On 22 January 1953, Liberte reported that the Central Committee of the PCA had held an important conference in Algiers 17 and 18 January. It cited the following reports and addresses made by various PCA secretaries: Bachir Hadj Ali made the opening report (summarized below); Ahmed Akkache reported on the organic and ideological strengthening of the party; Paul Caballero spoke on the coming municipal elections; and Larbi Bouhali made the closing address (summarized below). The newspaper stated that, in addition, the conference had been addressed by Leon Feix, a member of the Central Committee of the French Communist Party, who confidently assured the Algerian workers and people of the support of the workers and people of France.(1)

Bachir Hadj Ali Urges Revival of Algerian Front

The 22 January issue of Liberte carried a detailed account of the opening report by Bachir Hadj Ali, who reviewed the current situation and outlined the principal objectives of the PCA. The newspaper's rendition of this report follows in summarized form.

Bachir Hadj Ali opened the conference with an analysis of the international situation in the light of the 19th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. He quoted statistics on the latest Soviet Five-Year Plan

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and contrasted these with conditions of oppression under the Tsars. He then described the liberation movements developing in Asia and Africa, and showed how the recent World Peace Congress in Vienna [November 1952] had combined the struggles for independence and peace into a single effort.

He went on to stress the difficulties of the imperialists by quoting Malenkov as stating that the disintegration of the single world market was the most important economic result of World War II. The result of this disintegration, Bachir Hadj Ali indicated, has been to accentuate the already existing crisis among the capitalists, whose market is now being challenged by the prodigiously expanding socialist market. The capitalists, he said, think that the solution to their problem lies in preparing for war, but they are finding it difficult to do so. He illustrated this by declaring that the French Communist Party has led the fight in France to lower such military expenditures, which must be borne by the working class and the entire people. Furthermore, he added, the imperialists' plans have been hindered by national movements, particularly during 1952 and particularly in the three French North African countries.

Speaking of the recent UN debates on Morocco and Tunisia, Bachir Hadj Ali declared that US trickery at the UN was obvious. He pointed out that although the US and France did not agree exactly on the North African question, their differences had been set aside in the interest of strategic requirements. However, he noted, even if France has won a temporary respite, the Latin American resolutions established the fact that the UN is competent to deal with the Moroccan and Tunisian problems.

The speaker cited various instances of US interests which are divergent from those of other imperialist powers: Great Britain, concerning oil in the Middle East; all the other Atlantic [NATO] Council members, in attempting, through Ridgway, to make them increase their armament appropriations; and France and Germany, whom Wiley threatens with reprisals if they do not speedily accept the European Community Treaty.

Bachir Hadj Ali's report then dealt with the FADRL (Front Algerien pour la Defense et le Respect des Libertees Democratiques, Algerian Front for the Defense of and Respect for Democratic Liberties). He continued as follows: "Although the last [PCA] Central Committee called on all patriots to revive the FADRL, the goal was not achieved. The reasons for this are the FADRL'S federative nature, its lack of planning, and its insufficient number of basic committees. We saw also that after 23 May 1952, the leaders of the UDMA (Union Democratique du Manifeste Algerien, Democratic Union of the Algerian Manifesto) ordered their local sections not to respond any more to appeals for FADRL meetings. Consequently, until December it was impossible to hold meetings to enable the Front members to get the all-important guidance and training from nationalist fighters. There were indeed other meetings, and also strikes, but they merely pointed up what little had been accomplished [to strengthen the FADRL]. The fault lies with certain comrades who underestimate the strength of the national movement and lack confidence in the exploited masses.

"It is clear that the imperialists are trying to disintegrate the nationalist movements, which have gained considerable momentum because of the intensification of the imperialists' attempts to obtain maximum profits. The Fechteler report, for example, proposed a conciliation with the 'Arab nationalists' in order to embroil the three [French] North African countries in an anti-Soviet war, and to take over in North Africa in place of the French. But the imperialists are being stopped by our working class, by the influence of the PCA and the French Communist Party, and by the increasing influence of Communism in general. Yet by far the most important obstacle to the imperialists'

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attempts is the irresistible surge of unity. Our party's perseverance has helped this surge, as have the many meetings, protests, and joint letters to the FADRL. Moreover, the Algerian delegation to Vienna included members of the UDMA and the MTLD (Mouvement pour le Triomphe des Libertes Democratiques, Movement for the Triumph of Democratic Liberties).

"We must make it clear that our party is trying to bring about the revival of the FADRL. The Front grew out of the people's action and brought together all of the national Forces. The responsibility for its inactivity is not ours -- we clarified that by our letter on 8 July [1952] to the Secretariat of the FADRL."

The speaker then emphasized the necessity of defining the party's position, and continued: "We are criticized for being disciples of Stalin. Yes, we are his disciples. At the 19th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Stalin told those peoples still under the capitalists to raise high the banner of national independence. What patriot would not heed this advice? Furthermore, we can profit from Stalin's incomparable revolutionary experience. At the same time, the USSR's interests are inseparable from those of all peoples; this was proved by its position during the UN debates on Tunisia and Morocco. Stalin has helped the Asian and African peoples to get rid of the inferiority complex instilled in them by the imperialists. Therefore, the more we love Algeria, the more we are attached to the USSR and Stalin."

Bachir Hadj Ali went on to outline the PCA's immediate goals, including the following: revival of the FADRL; formation of many committees to combat repression; expression of solidarity with the Tunisians, Moroccans, and all persecuted anticolonialists; support of the demands of workers, fellahs, unemployed, and the middle classes; and struggle for peace, making use of the new ideas brought back by the Algerian delegation to the Vienna Peace Congress.

He indicated the importance of making it quite clear that there is an Algerian problem and that there is no such thing as three French departments in Algeria. He also stressed the importance of the coming municipal elections in May, for which, he said, consolidated electoral lists in both colleges should be developed, in favor of the national and democratic groups. He urged the party to gird itself for future battles by assuming responsibility and by using the methods of criticism, self-criticism, and revolutionary vigilance [within the party]. "The future struggle will be very hard," he declared, "and will require devotion and many sacrifices from the Communists. But the party's gains of 1952 entitle us to work on in the spirit of victory, bolstered by the knowledge that at the head of all our supporting forces is our beloved Stalin, who with every fresh utterance and writing gives us new reasons to hope, struggle, and vanquish."

In conclusion, he urged his comrades to display the Stalin-like qualities that were outlined in one of the latest issues of Lasting Peace [presumably the Cominform weekly, For a Lasting Peace, For a People's Democracy].(1)

#### Larbi Bouhali Indicates Ways to Strengthen PCA

On 29 January, Liberte carried an account (given here in summarized form) of the closing address of the conference, delivered by Larbi Bouhali, PCA Secretary.

Bouhali urged the members to keep the party's perspectives in view at all times, inasmuch as they are to engage in great struggles similar to those which are being prepared in many colonial countries. He stressed the need for criticism and self-criticism, to do away with any weaknesses in the PCA's activity.

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"The FADRL in particular," he observed, "has not been given enough attention by the Central Committee, even though it is our primary objective. We must bend all our efforts toward reactivating it, especially by making use of the masses."

He indicated that, while spurring on the working masses to press their demands, the party must prepare for the coming electoral campaign by spreading the slogan, "Consolidated anticolonialist electoral tickets."

"But the principal requisite for success," he noted, "is a strong party, made possible through a judicious choice of cadres and a thorough control of execution of plans. We must guard our party's unity by adhering to the Marxist-Leninist doctrine and to the policy we laid down at the Sixth Congress [of the PCA]. To correct our errors, we must use as our models the Communist parties of the USSR and France. An effective way to do this will be to study the documents of the 19th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, and especially the inspired work of comrade Stalin in The Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR."

He called on PCA militants to redouble their vigilance. In answer to the question as to which tasks were to be dealt with first, he said that all the tasks merited the party's attention, but that priority should depend specifically on each case and each area involved. "Vital changes," he declared, "can be made both in the party and in the present political situation, provided that we fight more methodically, firmly, and with conviction for our just cause."

He concluded by calling attention to the innumerable forces on the side of the PCA, and by acclaiming Stalin as the workers' inspired educator and guide, "at whose side we can go on with a sure step to the building of a free Algeria, the first stage on the way to socialism."(2)

#### PCA Sends Messages of Encouragement to Other Communists

The 29 January issue of Liberte also carried messages of encouragement which the Central Committee had drawn up for the following persons: French Communists Jacques Duclos, Francois Billoux, Etienne Fajon, Raymond Guyot, and Leon Feix, all of whom are members of the French Parliament, faced with a possible death sentence by the French government; Ali Yata, secretary of the Moroccan Communist Party; and the leaders of the Tunisian Communist Party. The newspaper indicated, in addition, that the PCA had sent a telegram to Washington, urging clemency for the Rosenbergs.(2)

#### PCA Issues Proclamation to All Algerians

The following is a summary of the full-page proclamation published by the Central Committee of the PCA in Liberte on 29 January 1953. [The paragraph headings, as given here, appeared in bold type.]

##### **Act and Unite to Solve the National Problem**

The popular masses in North Africa and all dominated countries are defying the colonialists and uniting in various groups to achieve their liberty. The stubborn colonialists have shown their fear by the assassination of Ferhat Hached [Tunisian nationalist labor leader], the massacres in Casablanca, and the police raids in Algeria.

As spokesman for the people, the PCA has as its foremost goal the end of oppression. It calls on all Algerians to unite and set up an Algerian democratic republic, with its own parliament, constitution, and government -- a republic which will maintain economic and cultural ties with France, bases on the equal rights of both peoples.

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## Colonialism on Trial

French imperialism in North Africa can no longer escape international attention, now that the UN has broached the Tunisian and Moroccan questions. But despite all evidence, this imperialism hypocritically repeats the lie that Algeria comprises three French departments. All Algerians know, however, that Algeria is a colony subjected to political oppression and complete economic exploitation. They have seen their righteous demands systematically rebuffed by the imperialists, who imposed on them a made-to-order, antidemocratic assembly.

## Election of a Truly Representative Algerian Assembly

The PCA proposes the election of a truly representative Algerian assembly. Such an assembly would meet with the French representatives and freely discuss Algeria's future and its future relations with France. To be democratic, the assembly would represent Moslem and European Algerians on a proportional basis, and the elections would be watched over by the people's organizations and by representatives of all French parliamentary groups and of the UN Security Council. No sincerely democratic person can refuse such a solution which will benefit all.

## Revive the FADRL

Millions of Algerians eagerly await the revival of the Front. To make this possible, we have to oppose arbitrary colonialist measures by forming everywhere Popular Committees Against Repression. Men of all nationalities, faiths, and national movements should weld themselves into a force which will compel respect for democratic liberties. Thus, repression can be stopped and the anticolonialist political prisoners can be released through a general amnesty like the one in 1946. We can force the colonialists to drop the charges against Larbi Bouhali, Messali Hadj, [leader of the MTLD] and all other Communist, nationalist, and labor leaders.

The thing to do is to organize and act. You Algerians must, in your own interest, actively support your Tunisian and Moroccan brothers and the workers and people of France, whose [Communist] leaders are persecuted for having defended the peoples oppressed by French imperialism. By uniting and acting, you will improve the working and economic conditions of laborers and fellahs, lower the high cost of living, and stop the dismissals and unemployment. United action will make it possible to put into practice the principles of the Vienna Peace Congress and to make known the results obtained by the Algerian delegation to the congress.

## Consolidate the Anticolonialist Electoral Ticket

Another way in which you can act is to prepare the way for an overwhelming victory at the coming municipal elections. Set up, in both electoral colleges, a common basic program for all parties and present single anti-colonialist electoral tickets.

Men and women of Algeria! Now is the time to fight. The recent UN decisions have shown all oppressed peoples that they must wage the fight for liberty on their own soil. They now see clearly who their enemies and their friends are. They have seen the duplicity of the American imperialists revealed in their anti-Tunisian and anti-Moroccan vote. At the same time, they have felt the support of the USSR, the People's Democracies, and the countries of Asia and Africa.

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We see, then, that our allies are many and powerful. While the imperialists are enmeshed in contradictions, the forces of freedom and peace are growing everywhere. In the lead is the USSR, which is winning victories every day in the establishment of Communism.

The proclamation then repeated the slogans already given in the form of titles, and ended with "Long Live the Algerian Front!"

Hussein Dey, 17 and 18 January 1953

The Algerian Communist Party

Elsewhere, in the same issue, Liberte had a notice to all PCA cells and groups, urging them to "study attentively the proclamation of the Central Committee" and to "post it up everywhere."(2)

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1. Liberte, 22 Jan 53  
2. Ibid., 29 Jan 53

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